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· CHAPTER XXI.

OLLIE, coming from the bunk house, glanced up and saw Black Boyar standing alone where his own peny had stood. This was an invitation; this was daring him

He rode into the canyon, half con-cious of Yuma's tracks ahead of him. He rode past the tracks as they swerved toward a grassy level near the stream.

ma, patting the pony's neck. Collie mised his sombrero formally. Louise was baroheaded. The clear

Louise was bareheaded. The clear morning sunlight enhanced has rich coloring. Against the misty gray of the canyon well her head, in profile as she stood beside the horse, was as delicately beautiful as that vision that imagination knows full well, but may

"Collie, don't! Say anything but that.

You look awfully gium. Surely not because I took Yuma."

"No. Only I was affered for you."

"So you followed at breaknesk speed to rescue the timerous, the despairing.

"I can't joke like that this morning."
"Why? I'm here, safe enough. Had

"Yes. I wanted to see you about something Louise."
"All right. But you are so unnaturally tall and sevene and judicial sitting there on Beyar. You look almost funereal. Please get down. Roll a cigarette and act natural. I'm not go-

rigarette and act natural. I'm to scold you, sir."

"I wish you would."

"Why? What have you be that makes you beat so ash yourself? Tell me!"

"I didn't know i was."

"You don't act maturally.

ig about mo-that is different?

her expression changed instantly. "I think you have something to remember me by comething you asked me for once, long ago. I sent it to you. You have never spoten of it acknowledged it I can't quite degree that."
"Your giove. I know. Ligot it here."
'And he touched his breast. "I thought you would understand."
"I do. But, Collie, a girl always likes

"I was going to write about getting your glove at the hospital. I guess ! was too tired."

"At the hospital?" Yes. Red sent it to me. Brand gave it to him to give to me-that

ing a little; but, sweetly perverse, she obeyed sheer instinct. "Collie, do you calize that I have already asked you to dismount? Sliall I have to ask you gain? Do you realize that I am stand-

ing while you are slitting your porse?"
"I am begging your pardon, Louise."
The girl noticed brightly, smiling as she noticed the little scar on his chin, for when she had:admonished him for ighting with Dick Tenlow.

She watched the rise and fall of the muscles of his arm beneath his fiannel shirt as he lighted his cigarette. How broad chested and strong and wholene he seemed in the morning sunlight! There was an untamed grace about his movements, his gestures which, together with his absolute unconsciousness of self, pleased and attracted her.

Yuma is a little wild, but she is saddle pony. I'm really jenious Boyar's prestige." "I was afraid for you to ride her,"

"She behaves beautifully." "Would you take her as a kind of present from me?" he asked.

"Give Yuma to me? I thought you loved her?"

"I do. That's why I want you to "He would give you away," said Louaway just as you're learning to trust him and perhaps even like him a little

-and he says he loves you! Let's run away from him, Humnfingbird?" think I could stand it if you would just be mean once," said Collie.

"Stand what, Collie?" He had been watching her shapely hand and supple, rounded wrist as she stroked the pony's neck. Swiftly she turned from the horse and faced him.
"What, Collie?" There was laughter
in her eyes, a laughter that challenged than her serious mood. Her lips

were smiling. Her chin was tilted provokingly.

His eyes grew wide with unspoken love, unuttered longing. He delighted in the delicious curve of her cheek and of her arm resting on the saddle. Her poise had an inexplicable suggestion of royal courage, as though she were battling for more than her lips could utter. In her absence he had adored



her. Now he forgot all that he had meant to tell her in the sensuous delight of her mere-presence. But even that was not enough. He dropped the pony's reins and stroke toward her. Louise paled even as he drew near, but he saw nothing but her eyes and her lips lips that curved wistfully, provoking tenderness and love. / For an instant Louise held her heart aloof.

"Let me just wership you—a little while—a little while," he whispered. "Only a little while?" she breathed. and the soft rose glowed in her cheeks "Just forever," he said.

And Louise Lacharme, more beautiful than the morning—Louise, his most gracious senorita, his Madonna of the Rose-lifted her arms to be. Her lips quivered like a child's, tremulous with nging to tell him silently, as his lips nd hers, all that her heart was giving and all the wealth of love it yet should give.

Gently his hands clasped her golden head. His whole being thrilled as he touched her hair, her cheeks, her lips. "Oh, Collie, Collie, love me always!" she whispered. And she drew him down to her breast and caressed his cheek, sighing and murmuring little endearments and sweet, broken words

stone canyon, coldly beautiful, schood the hoof beats of the ponies as they walked homeward.

Louise turned in the saddle, "Col lie," she said with an indescribable gesture of appeal, "you will always take care of me, won't you?" "My Rose Girl, why do you say

"I was thinking of my father." Louise saw his lips stiffen and his chin lift. "Louise, I had no right just now-I haven't any right-I'm poor. The claim wasn't ours."

ing wistfully. "But you will always care for me, won't you? I don't care one bit about the claim. It has made trouble and sorrow enough. I can't re member my father. I can hardly think of him as my father. But it is horrible to think of his dying for water because he cared so much for gold."

"I know," she answered gravely.
"And I know that you are a very, very foolish boy not to trust your friends hore than you do. Did you suppose you would be happier or better in leaving Moonstone rancho? Did you suppose I would be happier? Collie, you have so much to learn."

"I guess that's so," he sighed. Then his eres brightened with his old time mischief. "Couldn't you begin now to teach me a little-like back there in the canyon?"

And, being of a decisive habit of mind, he rode close to Louise and claimed immediate and delicious in-

"But how did you know," he asked again, "about the claim and your fa-"A secret that I share with Over-

and," she replied. "So he told you! When? Not last night. He was asleep when I came away this morning."

"So he is here, then?" "Louise, you're joking. Didn't Red mighty dirigibles.



"And you know all about it already?" He looked at her curiously for a mo



*Oh, Collie, Collie, love me

ment. "Did you know that I said ! was going to leave the Moonstone?

"For the same reason that I can't now-you. Red and Billy Winthrop

and I don't own a cent's worth of the claim now. I don't even own what's in the bank. All I got is Yuma."

"I sure did. I haven't even her. But I've got you Oh, Louise, I can't believe it! I could just shout. Can't I have another one, Rose Girl?" "Must, I teach you not to ask?" said

Collie took her other meaning as she made a little mound at him. "Not after this," he said and gave apt proof

"More than a whole carload of gold? she asked, gazing at him. "You know that too?"

"Collie!" "What is it?"

"Promise that you won't speak to any one about the claim or the deser or my father until I say you may." "Of course I promise." "Nor about ourselves until I tell

you to.' "Never-if it will make you happy."

(To Be Continued.)

BALLOONS

The first balloon ascension in Eng land was made 132 years ago today by Vincent Lunardi, an attache of the Neapolitan embassy in London. A

Frenchman, De-Moret, had planned to make an ascension the previous month, but his aerial craft caught fire and was consumed. Lunardi made his ascent from the artillery grounds at Moorfields, witnessed by a vast crowd. at a village in Hertfordshire, his appearance coming suddenly from the skies, causing wild consternation among the peasantry. Lunardi became the hero of the day in England and little else was talked about for weeks. The balloon was a French invention and Englishmen were greatly excited lest their hereditary enemies invade England by the aerial route. This fear died out when the people realized the possibilities and limitations of the balloon, anad was not revived until Zeppelin invented his

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P 26 *tf

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